Numb. XVIII.

The GRUMBLER.

By Squire GIZZARD.

-----Who did ever in French *Authors ſee*
The comprehenſive Engliſh *Energy?*
The weighty Bullion of one Sterling Line,
Drawn to French *Wire, would through whole Pages ſhine.*

Roſc.

From *Tueſday* May 17. to *Friday* May 20. 1715.

YEſterday a Gentleman of my Acquaintance came to make me a Viſit at my New Lodgings, and made me a Preſent of the laſt *French* Tragedy, which (as he ſaid) had been acted at *Paris* with good Succeſs. The Title of it is *Cato of Utica*. This made me eager to peruſe it; which I did, as ſoon as my Friend had left me, with a more than ordinary Diligence and Attention. I had not read quite ſo far as the End of the Third Act, when my Patience began to fail, and my Expectations ſunk to nothing. However, I was reſolved, ſince I had gone ſo far, to ſee the Concluſion of it. With much ado I went through the Whole: but do not remember, that I ever laid a Poet out of my Hand in greater Indignation. This done, I fully purpoſed, in the warm Reſentments of a Critick, to grumble in the Morning ſo loud, as to be heard from *London* to *Paris*.

Upon this I began to examine the whole Performance a-new; thinking to furniſh out this Day's Paper with Remarks upon it, and to draw a Parallel between this Piece, and that, which ſhines ſo much upon the *Britiſh* Stage. But here I was diſappointed again; finding, upon a ſecond Review, the *French Cato* as much beneath Criticiſm, as the *Engliſh Cato* is above it.

I am ſurprized, that *Monſieur des Champs* ſhould make Choice of ſo improper a Story for the Entertainment of his Yoke-Fellows: Does he not know that *Lucan* was never publiſhed in *France* for the uſe

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uſe of the *Dauphin*? Be that as it will, I am apt to believe the Poet's Want of Genius upon this Occaſion (whether it proceeded from Art or Nature) has ſtood him in great ſtead. It had been Treaſon in him to write up to his Subject. I could point out a great many ſublime and beautiful Paſſages in the *Engliſh* Tragedy, which no Actor would dare to pronounce, nor any Hearer to applaud, in the Preſence of the Grand Monarch.

The Race of great Poets is quite extinct in *France*. *Racine*, *Corneille*, *Boileau* have no Succeſſors. The Muſes will never be prevailed upon to fix their abode but in a Land of Liberty. The *Pariſians* are already come to ſo great a Degeneracy of Taſte, as to think *Monſieur de la Motte* a better Poet than *Homer*. The Wits are banded into Parties: the Factions run high; and it is to be feared, that the Forces who are aſſembled at one Coffee-Houſe to eſpouſe the Moderns, will prove too hard for the poor Gentlemen, who riſe in Defence of the Ancients. Lampoons and Satyrs have been plentifully diſperſed on both Sides; and there have been ſome rougher Skirmiſhes by way of Blows.

I intended to have thrown together two or three Paragraphs more to my preſent Purpoſe; but on the Inſtant I am utterly diſabled by a ſudden Stroke of ill News, which renders me incapable of attending to any Thing but my preſent Sorrow. What oppreſſes me will at the ſame Time occaſion ſo general a Grief, that I ſhall not need to make any farther Excuſe to my Readers for leaving off thus abruptly.

N. B. *This Paper will be continued every* Tueſday *and* Friday; *and all Correſpondents are deſired to direct their Letters*

To ANTHONY GIZZARD, *Eſq*; Or,
To the GRUMBLER,

To be left at W. Wilkins's, *at the* Dolphin *in* Little-Britain; *and I can aſſure them that every ſuch Letter will come to the Hands of their faithful humble Servant.*

LONDON: *Printed by* W. WILKINS, *at the* Dolphin *in* Little-Britain; *and Sold by* J. ROBERTS, *in* Warwick-Lane.
Where Advertiſements are taken in.